DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 142 877 CG 011 606

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TITLE Social Cognition and Development: Some Thoughts on Broadening the Structuralist Approach.
PUB DATE 76
NOTE 24p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Eastern Psychological Association (New York, N.Y., April 22-24, 1976) ; Some parts may be marginally legible due to print quality of the original document

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Child Development; *Cognitive Development; *Curriculum; Elementary Education; Elementary School Students; Group Dynamics; *Interpersonal Competence; *Primary Grades; Social Relations; State of the Art Reviews

ABSTRACT

This paper is a theoretical discussion based on a primary grade, social developmental curriculum developed from cognitive developmental theory and a social-cognitive theory of stages in the developing conceptions of interpersonal relations. The body of the paper focuses on changes, refinements and additions the study has suggested are needed in the traditional cognitive developmental conceptualization of social development and the measurement of its change. Three main issues were considered. (1) The paper first argues the need to distinguish between the child's spontaneous orientation to thinking about a social issue and his deeper reasoning competence. (2) A second section suggests that the individual and situational differences reflected in patterns of decalage are worthy of more attention than traditionally given by structuralist theorists and researchers and argues that such patterns are useful topics of investigation in themselves. (3) The final part emphasizes the value of adding analyses of group process variables to traditional stage change scores. Examples from the author's intervention study are cited throughout, and some suggestions for future investigation are offered. (Author)

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ED142877

Social Cognition and Development

Some Thoughts on Broadening the Structuralist Approach[1]

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Paper presented at the 1976 Convention of the Eastern Psychological Association. Symposium: Cognitive Processes in Developmental Social Psychology.

Introduction

Kurt Lewin once remarked, "there is nothing so practical as good theory." To this well-known adage I'd like to add my own admittedly less famous, but I believe, equally valid corollary: there is nothing so quick to reveal the problems, limitations and needed refinements in theory than careful attempts at practical application. In my paper today, I will present one such attempt to apply theory to practice and discuss some theoretical and methodological insights which have resulted from this. More specifically, the paper will report on a primary grade, social developmental curriculum based on cognitive developmental theory. We will first overview this theory and the curriculum developed from it. We will then briefly describe the intervention itself and the measures used to evaluate change. Finally, and most importantly, I will discuss some changes, refinements and additions this study has suggested are needed in the traditional cognitive developmental conceptualization of social development and the measurement of its change. I will try to show that although the cognitive developmental approach is useful and valid in itself, as traditionally conceived it is incomplete and ignores important areas of social development. I will argue that what is needed is more attention to those areas such as attitudes, individual and situational differences, and group processes which have typically been of more interest to the social than the developmental psychologist. Finally, I will suggest areas in which I believe that such a social psychological perspective might be most profitably focused in the hopes that this will be of future value to the theorist and the potential interventionist as well.

Theoretical background

First, let's turn briefly to the theory. In recent years there has

been increasing interest in extending cognitive developmental theory originally focused on stages in the child's developing understanding of the physical world into the study of the child's developing understanding of the social world as well. In contrast to social psychological work which has long analyzed social reasoning and behavior in adults, such social-cognitive studies have attempted to define stages in the child's developing concepts and ways of thinking about various aspects of his social world, focusing on the structure or organization of the reasoning rather than on the child's specific thoughts or attitudes, and emphasizing universal age-related patterns and similarities rather than individual or situation-related differences. In contrast to other approaches, structural developmental theory further argues that cognitive re-organization underlies such developing patterns. Two basic mechanisms are believed to lead to this re-organization: first, the individual must experience a social situation as a dilemma, one not easily resolved according to his present assumptions and ways of reasoning; second, exposure to slightly more adequate stages of reasoning may facilitate development to the next stage.

In line with this general trend of interest, I have been involved with Selman and others in developing in a four year longitudinal study a description of the levels of interpersonal conceptions through which all children pass in an ordered sequence.[2] These levels are based on the child's increasing ability to understand and relate others' perspectives. A brief description of the six levels of interpersonal conception and the related underlying social-perspective taking structure is presented in the Appendix.

On the basis of both this stage description and the structural theory of change, a primary grade social developmental curriculum was devised. This

consists of a series of 16 sound filmstrips presenting social dilemmas rather similar in form to the perhaps more familiar moral dilemmas.[3] Although they cover a wide range of issues theoretically related to the development of interpersonal reasoning, the form of each is similar:

1. They are each a dramatic story presenting a conflict between two values or beliefs understood by children of this age.
2. They are open, so children of this age disagree as to how the conflict should be resolved and have difficulty making up their own minds.
3. The problem is best resolved by considering another person's point of view.
4. They do not give a "right" answer or ending to the story, but rather present varying reasons near and slightly above the level of most of the children in the class.

For instance, one of the films involves a girl's dilemma of whether to keep a planned date with a longtime friend or to break this and do something with a new girl in school. Within the story line are presented reasons for both courses of action, but this is left unresolved at the end. And the best resolution involves a consideration of how each of the friends--the new girl and the old chum--will feel.

The presentation of the film is only a small part of the curriculum. Following the films, the children are organized into small groups in which they discuss the issues, giving reasons for their opinions and debating about whether some reasons are better than others. Role-playing and formal debate are also used. The purpose of these methods is to help the children actively focus on the interpersonal dilemma, to realize that there is more than one possible resolution to be considered, and to provide them with direct feedback as to what others are thinking and feeling. Theoretically, it is this active consideration and indecision over an interpersonal dilemma which should lead to stage development in interpersonal reasoning.

Intervention design and evaluation

To study the effects of this curriculum we used it in a ten week

intervention program with 14 second and third grade classes in middle and working class schools. Matched control classes received no experimental intervention, simply proceeding as usual. Four boys and four girls from each class were randomly chosen to receive the pre, post, and delayed post-testing. There were 96 subjects in all.

In addition to extensive class observation and teacher and student interviewing, three formal outcome measures were used. The first two were traditional stage change measures. The first, Flavell's nickel-dime game (1968) is a basic social-perspective-taking structural measure used to evaluate the child's ability simply to take another's perspective and relate it to his own, an ability which theoretically underlies the child's developing interpersonal conceptions. Briefly, this consists of a game in which the child tries to guess in which of two boxes, labeled 5¢ and 10¢ respectively, an opponent who is trying to trick the child has hidden a coin. He is then asked to explain the reasons for his choice. Second is a clinical interview designed by Selman (1974) to evaluate the child's level of interpersonal reasoning. In this, the child is shown a filmstrip about an interpersonal dilemma and is then given an approximately 20 minute, semi-structured interview to ascertain his level of reasoning about persons and relations. Finally, we added a third, less traditional measure. This involved three-child group discussions of interpersonal situations which were analyzed in terms of the interpersonal content and the interactional structure of the discussion.

Rather than focusing on the conclusions which are tentatively emerging from our data analysis, I think it more valuable for the purposes of this symposium to take the rest of the time available to discuss a number of issues related to the cognitive developmental conceptualization and measurement of social development which have forced their way rather frontally

before me as I have attempted to analyze and understand the effects of this program. Anyone interested in more details of the intervention or the actual data analysis should of course feel free to contact me later.[4]

Issues in the structural approach to social developmental change and its measurement.

1. Spontaneous orientation vs. reasoning ability. The first two issues I want to raise today involve the stage change measures themselves. First, we will consider the need to distinguish between (1) the child's spontaneous orientation to thinking about a social issue and (2) his deeper reasoning ability about it. Although there are a variety of methods used to evaluate social cognitive development, most involve presenting the child with an interpersonal problem or dilemma and probing either briefly or in greater depth his reasoning about this. In our study, for instance, the child is presented with the following dilemma:

> Eight-year-old Tom is trying to decide what to buy his friend Mike for his surprise birthday party. By chance, he meets Mike on the street and learns that Mike is extremely upset because his dog, Pepper, has been lost for two weeks. In fact, Mike is so upset that he tells Tom, "I miss Pepper so much I never even want to look at another dog again." Tom goes off, only to pass a store with a sale on puppies; only two are left and these will soon be gone. The dilemma, then, is whether to buy the puppy for Mike and how this will influence their friendship.

The interpersonal conception interview covers four categories--subjectivity, self-awareness, personality and relations--basic to the child's developing conceptions of persons and relations. Each category has a basic orienting question followed by a series of relatively standard probe questions designed to elicit further explanation and clarification of the child's concepts and reasoning. In addition, these questions also test the child's ability to take different aspects of the situation into consideration, to make discriminations and integrations not originally made and so on. As is common practice, the subject's complete set of responses in each category is evaluated and given a stage score. These are then averaged to provide

the overall stage of interpersonal conception.

I would like here, however, to suggest the value of scoring not only this complete interview, but in addition scoring the child's initial spontaneous response to the orienting question in each category. Let me explain. By doing the kind of probing described above we are I think evaluating the level of the child's interpersonal reasoning ability--his ability to make various distinctions, to reason in certain ways and so forth. However, there is often a discrepancy between the child's underlying ability and his spontaneous performance--which aspects of a situation the child spontaneously focuses on, how he initially reasons about this issue and so on.

An example from our data may clarify this. A major difference between stage 1 and stage 2 conceptions of subjectivity--one of the basic categories of interpersonal conceptions--is that the stage 2 child realizes that an individual may have two feelings at the same time, while the stage 1 child cannot understand this.[5] This is because the stage 1 child still concretizes emotions: feeling happy and sad at the same time is akin to being in New York and Chicago at the same time. In our interview, the child's conception of subjectivity is evaluated mainly by probing his understanding of the birthday boy's feelings if he gets the puppy as a present. The stage 2 child will understand that he may be both happy and sad--happy about the new dog, but sad about his old one who is lost. The stage 1 child, however believes that Mike could only feel 1 way--either happy or sad, but not both. However, it is not uncommon for the child capable of stage 2 conceptions to initially respond to this issue by focusing only on one emotion and not spontaneously recognizing the need to consider that Mike could feel two ways. Only later during the interview does this child reveal his stage 2 awareness that Mike could in fact feel both happy and sad at the same time.

Of course such a child who eventually but not initially reveals this stage 2 awareness cannot be said to lack this in his "spontaneous orientation level;" the distinction we are proposing is not that of two different kinds of stages, spontaneous orientation and deeper reasoning. Rather it reflects simply the varying degrees of readiness or tendency in children to use this underlying ability, an aspect of reasoning akin to the social psychologist's notion of attitude or orientation. The distinction in fact appears closely related to Flavell's (1968) differentiation between existence and need: a child may have an underlying reasoning ability (existence) but simply not see any call to use this (need) in a specific situation.[6]

It seems possible that this kind of intervention may have more effect on this initial spontaneous focus than on the deeper reasoning ability. In fact, in analyzing our data with the complete stage scoring, we found that there does not appear to be a significant experimental effect on stage. However, in our initial scoring of those same interviews for stage of spontaneous orientation, we do appear to be finding significant curriculum effect in some areas.

There are several reasons why an awareness of this spontaneous orientation/ability distinction is important: first, this might help us better to understand the discrepancy in results in the various social-cognitive interventions, some of which have claimed considerable stage change while others have found little or none. Although there are clearly a wide variety of possible explanations for this, it may be that the amount of change found is related to the depth or length of the interview or other evaluative measure used--whether they tapped spontaneous performance or a deeper level closer to the child's ability. Ironically, if our findings that it is easier to change the subject's tendency to use his ability rather than to change the ability itself holds up, those studies carefully using

long and in-depth evaluation procedures would likely show less treatment effect than would those with shorter, more surface evaluations.

Secondly, there has been increasing interest in exploring the relationship between reasoning and behavior. In general this relation has been found to be inconsistent and difficult to conceptualize. This has led many to question the value of the structuralist focus on reasoning. However it seems likely that the spontaneous tendency to use this reasoning ability may be more closely related to choices made in real life behavior than is the reasoning ability itself. In other words, this orientation might be a potentially important mediating factor between reasoning and behavior. A study which evaluated not only reasoning ability but also spontaneous use of this and related both to real life choices and actions would potentially clarify this presently foggy issue.

Finally, perhaps intervention strategies themselves should vary according to the fit between the child's interpersonal orientation and his interpersonal reasoning ability. When these are close, the structural approach focusing on stage change might be most appropriate. However, where a wide discrepancy exists and the ability far exceeds the spontaneous use other techniques--sensitivity training, direct teaching, even modeling or reinforcement strategies--might be more appropriate.

2. Decalage as a useful topic of investigation. The second aspect of stage analysis I want to comment on today involves the structuralist attitude to decalage. I will suggest that the individual and situational differences reflected in patterns of decalage are worthy of more attention than traditionally given by structuralist theorists and researchers. A central assumption of structuralist theory is that within each person the different interpersonal conceptions should hang together. That is, a child with stage 1 conceptions of subjectivity should have stage 1 or stage 2 con-

ceptions of personality, relations and self-awareness. This is because structuralist theory assumes that these conceptions develop from a common structural base--in this case the social-perspective-taking level. When there is a difference in reasoning stage, for instance stage 1 on subjectivity and stage 2 on relations, this is referred to as decalage. Sometimes there seems to be a pattern here: all children tend to get higher scores in certain areas or in certain tasks than in others. Sometimes, there is no such readily apparent regularity.

Let me explain with some examples from my data. In analyzing the child's level of understanding of personality, one of the four basic categories, we probed his understanding of the personality of two of the boys in the story described above. By chance, one was black and the other was white. We found that as a general pattern our subjects--all of whom were white--reasoned at a higher stage about the white character than about the black one. When asked to describe this first child, for instance, they frequently used stage 2, interpersonal, descriptions: "he's a nice boy who is trying to cheer up his friend." Yet in describing the other child, these same children frequently revealed a stage 1 focus on physical characteristics: "he is black." Only once did a child describe the white character by color.

A similar pattern is seen in a comparison of the subjects' ability to take the perspective of the other in the nickel-dime and in the interpersonal conception task. Subjects quite frequently were more able to focus on another's intention in the nickel-dime than in the interpersonal dilemma. For instance, in the game, a level 2 child would focus on his opponent's intentions in deciding where the money was most likely to be found: "He knows I want the dime, so he'll take that, because he's trying to trick me." Frequently these same children, however, could not focus on the intentions of the other child in the interpersonal puppy dilemma described

above. When asked if Mike would stop being friends with Tom if Tom bought the puppy and Mike did not want it, many of these same children did not take a stage 2 focus on intentions and realize that Tom was trying to be nice and get a good present for Mike. Rather they would simply say "he'd stop being friends 'cause he didn't like the present."

Finally, in evaluating the consistency of each child's scores in the different categories of interpersonal reasoning on our interpersonal conception interview, we found different patterns: some children scored higher on some categorys while other scored higher on others.

The structuralists' general attitude to decalage is to find it relatively uninteresting, to see it as an unfortunate and untidy bit of reality. It is something one has to prove does not exist to any great extent. As one theorist recently described this, "although minor variations are to be expected, wide variations in stage across category or across tasks of roughly equivalent difficulty would be a severe embarassment to any structural claim" (Selman, 1976, p. 170).

Now, the differences in stage described above are not great enough to be seen as a "problem" to the structural theory; but neither have such differences been typically viewed as something of interest. Although there is some developing investigation in this area (cf. Selman, 1976), structuralists have generally been so interested in investigating universal similarities that they have not taken differences such as described above very seriously. I would argue however that decalage is really much more interesting than we structuralists have recognized, and that increased study and understanding of the causes and pattern of decalage would contribute significantly to our understnading of social reasoning and development. For instance, why were some children able to focus on intentionality in the nickel-dime game but not in the interpersonal dilemma? Why did we see higher level

reasoning about the white than the black child? Are there certain characteristics of social objects or relations--familiarity, prejudice, friendship--which make it easier for children to reason at higher levels about them? What is the effect of social atmosphere--of anxiety or competition--on level of reasoning? What about personality variables: do introverts reason higher on questions of self-awareness than on relations and extroverts do the opposite? Clearly there are innumerable possibilities here that would certainly be worth investigating.

3. The value of adding group process as an important variable in social-cognitive development. As my third and final point, I would like to suggest the potential value of adding an additional, non-individual, non-stage focus to the understanding and evaluation of social-cognitive development. This is the focus on the group as a unit and on the measurement and evaluation of group process and change. There is strong theoretical rationale for the inclusion of this focus in studies of social-cognitive development. Social interaction, in fact, is seen by Piaget as the major means of social development and a critical factor in intellectual development as well (Piaget, 1932, 1967). Just as the child learns about the physical world by testing out his assumptions on things and getting feedback from the results as to the correctness of these assumptions, it is by testing one's ideas on other people and getting feedback from them as to the accuracy of one's conceptions and interpretations that social development should occur. This has long been recognized by social-cognitive theorists: in fact social discussion and feedback typically have been incorporated into intervention procedures aimed at stimulating stage change. Yet we have tended to see this as a means to an end--stage movement--rather than an end in itself. Changes in the quality or type of group interaction itself have received little attention from these same researchers.

In fact, although we suspected the value of including this kind of evaluation in our intervention, we simply could not find studies of age- or stage-related changes in groups upon which to base this measure. As a result we developed our own instrument on the basis mainly on social psychological work with development in adult groups and cognitive developmental work on developing patterns of communication in dyads. Briefly, this measure consists of having groups of three children discuss and reach a consensus in social situations (making up a story to go along with a picture and deciding on a present to buy for their teacher). These discussions are taped and scored along dimensions of socio-emotional atmosphere and communication patterns. In addition, we added extensive classroom observations of group process as well as interviews of teachers and children for their impressions of changes in group patterns and processes. It was hoped in these ways to get some insights into possible changes in this area.

I am not now advocating the use of the instrument we developed. Although we did find grade-related and pre-post-related development along various socio-emotional, interactional and communication dimensions, there is so much with group variation and noise as to make interpretation of small amounts of change a very complicated matter. Let me cite just one example. One of our port-testing days fell on the day of a huge snowstorm. Unfortunately the room we were using had a full side of windows. My impression was that although it took a little longer to settle the children down for the individual interviews, this did not significnatly influence their responses. However the groups were quite a different story: they were simply off the walls, or perhaps more literally on the windows, and group cohesion, autonomy, interdependence and so on simply lost out to the weather.

Nonetheless, although our results are somewhat ambiguous and anecdotal I would like to describe some of the trends we think we saw in this measure,

our class observations, and teacher interviews in the hope that future studies will be encouraged to proceed from here. First, there is some suggestive increase in the degree to which the children focused on the interpersonal aspect of the situation they were discussing. By the end of the intervention, teachers and observers reported that the children were much more able to recognize the interpersonal dilemma in the story and focus on this in group discussions. Second, children seemed more aware of the value of testing out their ideas as to the best interpretation or decision on others: observers for instance noted an increase in some children's efforts to convince and persuade others of their ideas and opinions and to listen to other children's ideas. Finally, discussions tended to last longer, and the groups became more autonomous--more able to work out the problems themselves--than they were at the beginning of the intervention.

Of course, we cannot claim that these changes are the direct result of discussing social dilemmas. Teachers in fact tended to work directly with the children on group skills in order better to implement the program and facilitate discussions. Further these observations are admittedly tentative and ambiguous. But I think they point to a useful direction for future evaluation of such interventions and provide us with some intriguing insights as to what really might be going on in groups of children as they develop to more mature levels of social reasoning. Of course we cannot now be sure whether the group changes mentioned here are in fact related to stage change or development in general. But it would seem a useful goal for future studies to analyze more fully these kinds of changes and discover if and how they are related to the structure, use, and stimulation of the child's developing social reasoning abilities.

Conclusion

In a conference on social cognition five years ago, John Flavell remarked in his usual carefully measured style:

> There tends to be something less than adequate interchange and mutual stimulation between the social psychologists who study the various forms of adult social cognition and the developmental psychologists who investigate the growth of the same or similar forms during childhood and adolescence. While developmental work is sometimes cited by the specialist in adult social cognition . . . one suspects that, with occasional exceptions it plays little role in his thinking about the topic. More importantly, perhaps, research on social-cognitive growth is only rarely explicitly shaped and guided by research and theory in the corresponding adult field.
>
> (Flavell, 1974, p. 67)

We have made some progress in the past five years, and there is increasing interest in and recognition of the value of such a joint approach. Yet this is far from complete. The divisions between the two fields remain many and communication and collaboration between them is only just beginning. I have tried tonight to point out some limitations and needed refinements in the structuralist approach to social-cognitive development and have argued that many of these could be resolved by taking a more social-psychological perspective. As promised, I have focused more on problems than on solutions, more on potential research than on previous results. In discussing the limitations of cognitive theory, I am not criticising it as a theory. Indeed I remain a committed structuralist. Yet I have tried to show areas in which combining the cognitive focus on similarities and thought organization with the social psychological interest in differences and thought content would contribute to our overall understanding of social-cognitive development. The collaboration between these two fields will not be easy: there are many differences in focus and method which will have to be resolved and many compromises which will have to be made. But it is something which must be attempted if we are to move from isolated theories to a more comprehensive view of the complexities of social development.

My goal today was simply to suggest a few areas in which this initial collaboration could profitably be begun.

Notes

1. The research discussed here was partially supported by a grant from The Spencer Foundation, Chicago, Illinois and partially by a grant from Guidance Associates, New York, New York, publisher of the curriculum to the Harvard-Judge Baker Social Reasoning Project.

2. This has been a primary goal of the Harvard-Judge Baker Social Reasoning Project, supported by a grant from The Spencer Foundation, Chicago, Illinois. A manual describing in detail these levels and the scoring system is available from the Harvard-Judge Baker Social Reasoning Project, Larsen Hall, Appian Way, Cambridge, Mass. 02138.

3. These filmstrips, entitled First Things: Social Reasoning (developed by R. Selman and D. Byrne) and First Things: Values (developed by R. Selman and L. Kohlberg) are published by Guidance Associates, Division of Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, New York, New York.

4. I am presently completing the quantitative analysis of the intervention results, so the findings reported here must for the moment be considered tentative. A detailed description of the intervention, scoring and formal analysis will be available in Cooney, E. W. Social-Cognitive Development: An Experimental Intervention in the Elementary Grades, in preparation.

5. It should be noted that references to "stage 1 child" or "stage 2 child" are really short-hand ways of referring to "a child who gives stage _ reasoning about interpersonal issues in this interview. It is the reasoning, not the child, that can be appropriately staged in this manner.

6. Although throughout this section I refer to the child's underlying "ability" it should be emphasized that with limited verbal and performance measures of this kind one can never really hope to assess a child's true abflity. I am here simply arguing that by fully probing the child's responses in this clinical interview we get somewhat closer to understanding how well the child is able to perform than we do by looking only at his initial, unprobed responses.

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Levels of social perspective taking and the related levels of interpersonal conceptions (interpersonal conceptions of the subjectivity of persons and of relations between persons).*

Level 0 - Egocentric perspective taking (S's P→X = O's P→X)[1]

Although the (preschool)[2] child can identify simple subjective aspects of himself and others (e.g., thoughts and feelings), he does not differentiate clearly others' subjectivity from his own. He does not always recognize that another may interpret the same social event or course of action differently from the way he does.

Interpersonal conception of relationships - Interpersonal relationships are defined in physical terms (we are friends because we live close to each other), or in terms of egocentric desire (I like her because she has nice toys), not in terms of the subjective relation of one self and another.

Interpersonal conception of persons - There is a general confusion of a concept of the physical self (person) and the psychological or subjective self (person), (e.g., the child responds to questions regarding covert or psychological experience -- "What kind of person is he?" -- in terms of overt or physical characteristics of appearances -- "A boy, a big boy, a boy who cries a lot") or in terms of simple tags or labels with no underlying psychological basis (a good boy).

Common underlying structures in conceptions of relations and persons - confusion of subjective/objective in both persons and relations.

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1. S means self — P ⟶ means perception of
   O means other — ⟶I⟶ means infers that
   X means a social event — ⟶ means takes the perspective of

2. The levels within the parentheses represent the typical ages at which the descriptive levels generally appear.

* From Selman, R. L. The development of conceptions of interpersonal relations: A structural analysis and procedures for the assessment of levels of interpersonal reasoning based on levels of social perspective-taking. Harvard-Judge Baker Social Reasoning Project, 1974.

Level 1 - Subjective perspective taking (S $\dashrightarrow$ O's P$\rightarrow$X = or $\neq$ S's P$\rightarrow$X)

The (early elementary age) child begins to understand that even under the same circumstances other people's thoughts and feelings may be the same as or different from his own. People think or feel differently about social events or have different information available to them, i.e., persons are subjects.

Interpersonal conception of relationships - Interpersonal relations are between the overt action of one actor and the subjective evaluation of this action by the other ("I get along well with my mother; I take out the garbage and that makes her happy"). Subjectivity of relations is unidirectional; i.e., the subjectivity of only one person at a time is considered.

Interpersonal conception of persons - The child has a clearly subjective conception of people as interpretors of social events, as having evaluative or judgmental powers. However, persons still are described in terms of context specific subjective attitudes (e.g., "What kind of person is Tom?" "He is a boy who wants to find his lost dog"). Persons are not seen as having more than one subjective attitude toward a particular event.

Common underlying structures in conceptions of relations and persons - Orientation to one subjective perspective in a relation and one subjective attitude within persons.

Level 2- Self-reflective perspective taking (S $\dashrightarrow$ O$\rightarrow$S; or S $\dashrightarrow$ S$\rightarrow$S)

The (early preadolescent - latency) child is able to reflect on his own thoughts and feelings from another's perspective--to put himself in the other's shoes, to see the self as a subject. The child's ability to conceptualize another's perspective on his own thoughts and feelings makes him aware that this influences his own conception of another as a perspective-taker.

Interpersonal conception of relationships - Interpersonal relations are seen in terms of reciprocal subjectivity. A (good) relation is one in which each party is aware of the other's (good) intentions toward the self. (A knows B's good intentions towards A; B knows A's good intentions towards B.) Concern is for each person's evaluation of, or response to the other's actions, not to each person's concern for the effects of his own actions or intentions on another's subjective evaluation of himself. ("We are friends because he likes me and I like him.")

Interpersonal conception of persons - People can have conflicting thoughts, feelings, or motives toward a social event. People can project a superficial or front self for the benefit of others which is separate from the "true" self known only to oneself. People are described in terms of their understanding of how others will view their own subjective reality ("What kind of person is Tom?"--"He brags a lot because he wants others to like him").

Common underlying structures in conceptions of relations and persons - Consideration of multiple subjective perspectives, i.e., of more than one person's view and consideration of multiple viewpoints or subjective attitudes within persons.

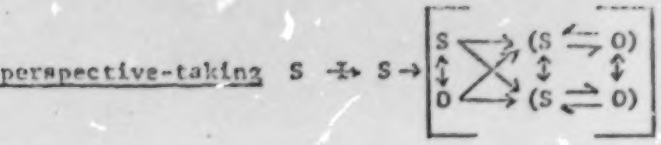
Level 3 - Third person perspective taking - S $\dashrightarrow$ S $\rightarrow$ (O $\rightleftarrows$ S) or S $\dashrightarrow$ S $\rightarrow$ (S $\rightleftarrows$ S)

The (late preadolescent) child can assume a "disinterested" or third-person (generalized other) point of view. By being able to hypothetically step outside of the dyad, the child is aware that in a two person interaction, each subject can simultaneously consider self and other's perspective as they relate to one another.

Interpersonal conception of relationships - Interpersonal relations are seen as mutual (e.g., shared interests). Taking an "outside" perspective allows the self to view relations based on mutual expectations; each actor is aware of the effect of his own intentions (subjectivity) on other's intentions and on other's reaction to him, at the same time as he considers the effects of other's actions and intentions on the self and the self's reaction to other.

Interpersonal conception of persons - At this level there emerges a clearer conception of mind as an "observing ego"--a third person view of the self's own reflections on the self's social actions. Persons or selves are now characterized or described in terms of simple generalizations such as traits or psychological stereotypes which derive from interpersonal behavior (He is a braggart, a sadist). The self (as a simple abstraction) has temporal continuity across the discontinuity of specific social actions.

Common underlying structures in conceptions of relations and persons - Third person view on relations leading to conceptions of mutuality and third person view of persons leading to conceptions of the self in objective or stereotypical personality terms.

Level 4 - Qualitative systems social perspective-taking S ⇉ S → 

The (adolescent) subject conceptualizes subjective perspective of persons toward one another to exist not only on the singular plane of common interests or expectations but also at deeper levels (the unconscious, the meaningful). Perspectives between persons are seen as forming a network or system. There are multiple levels of perspective taking and multiple systems of perspectives in this latter case the conception of "perspective" is generalized--e.g., society's perspective, the legal perspective. It can be a purely hypothetical or abstracted perspective.

Interpersonal conceptions of relations - The orientation is to the qualitatively distinct nature of different types of interpersonal relations, from the superficial (a throw-away friend), to the deep (we are on the same wave length). Mutuality is now more than a common or shared interest with other, it is a sharing of that which is meaningful at the deeper levels of the self-system. Each qualitative level of relationship is represented by a distinct system of perspectives. In other words, there is an awareness of the relation among different types of relationships.

Interpersonal conception of persons - Persons are now seen functioning at different levels of self awareness, they may be unaware (unconscious of) certain aspects of their interpersonal behavior or of their personality. There is a conception of a self (or self system) which has depth as well as breadth (temporal continuity). A conception of a psychological self-system which guides both personal actions and reactions to others (including the function of protection of the self-system from painful interpersonal or emotional experiences) predominates. The self is seen as a closed multi-dimensional system in interaction with other such systems (persons). Personality is viewed as a concept composed of the cumulative effect of a number of psychological traits, attitudes, and values which may be in congruence or in conflict (He is a shrewd person, but a kind person once you get to know him). In other words, the person or ego is seen as a set of psychological systems within a system.

Common underlying structures in conceptions of relations and persons - Qualitatively distinct levels of systems of relations and qualitative psychological systems within the self (i.e., conflicting value systems, traits, etc.).

Level 5 - Symbolic interaction perspective taking

Perspective-taking is a method for the analysis of interpersonal and social relations. Due to the nature of subjectivity itself one does not necessarily "know" the other's perspective as a content. However, perspective-taking involves the analysis of symbolic as well as overt or covert meanings between subjects and persons can come to mutual agreement through the use of similar processes of social reasoning.

Interretive conception of interpersonal conceptions of persons and relations - These two categories of social experience, one a class category (persons), the other a relational category (interpersonal relations) are seen to be tied to one another as a single process. Theorists such as H. S. Sullivan who view the study of personality as the study of interpersonal relations exemplifies this conception. Persons are defined in terms of the relationships they have with other persons (e.g., He is dependent when he is with a strong father figure) and conversely, the way persons relate to one another can be theoretically analyzed, or interpreted according to an in-depth analysis of the person as he views his relations with others. Relations and interpersonal behavior can have second-order or symbolic meaning (e.g., He says, marriages don't work these days, but he is really reacting to his sense of failure and loss in his own marriage). In the above example, the person's own subjectivity ("sense of failure") is seen as inextricably tied to his conception of the relationship between subjects (in the above, the marriage relation). Selves symbolically incorporate relations and the reverse (e.g., She had become a part of him, a part of his existence).